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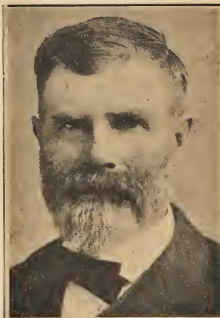






# JOURNAL OF OVERLAND TRAVEL

Kept by William Gregg McPherson



WILLIAM GREGG MCPHERSON

By his daughter, (Mrs. Richard W.),  
Clara McPherson Jones.

Orange, Calif. News  
Aug. 6-12, 1937





The late William Gregg McPherson, a pioneer of Orange county, left with his daughter, five small journals covering his life from 1852 to 1876. As one volume covers a six months trip from Oregon, Ogle county, Illinois to Downieville, Sierra county, California, and other items in his life as a miner in Downieville it has been suggested that these might be of interest to the people of Orange and so the one telling of his trip across the plains is being published in the Orange Daily News. Mr. McPherson was a good neighbor and deeply interested in the development of this part of the state. He came to Westminster with his family of wife and three children, Edwin Hugh, William Gregg jr., and Clara in 1871, from San Jose where he had been teaching for a few years after his 10 years of mining around Downieville, Sierra county, and a short time in Yuba county. Westminster had been started as a Presbyterian colony, a small town was developed, land was sold for those interested in farming and it seemed a good place to bring up his family. There had been three wonderful years of good rains and it was supposed there was a never failing supply that would assure crops every year. But much to their disappointment, the good years were followed with some extremely lean ones and the settlers began to plan for water.

It was found there was a supply of artesian water so in 1872, W. G. McPherson bought some well tools, the first owned in the county, and went to work boring for water. A corporation was formed, called The Westminster Artesian Well-Boring Co., with him in charge. A large number of the wells in Westminster were bored in the next few years, and fine artesian flow was secured at rather meager depth.

During this year two cousins, Stephen McPherson, unmarried and Robert McPherson with his family come from San Jose, and bought land near. In 1873 two sisters came, Miss Rosanna McPherson (later Mrs. Seth Harris) of Chaumont, N. Y., and Elizabeth with husband Adoniram Judson Sanders and son Will.

Robert and Stephen McPherson and the Sanders family preferred to live across the Santiago creek east of Richland now Orange, so purchased there in 1873. William McPherson and wife thought they might sometime like to join the new colony so they bought 40 acres at South Prospect and East Chapman Ave. An entry in the daily account book of February 13, 1873, "Bought 40 acres of land at Richland (now Orange) for \$15 an acre and another entry. Bought stock in Semi-Tropical Water Co., to the amount of \$80 July 1873.

It was not until 10 years later that the family joined the settlement of relatives, but all the years Mr. McPherson had been doing his full share in the development of the community. The \$80 paid to the Semi-Water Co., only allowed him the right to join with his neighbors in bringing the water from the place where it was divided in the Santa Ana canyon. The neighbors took their tools and teams and made the ditches that brought the water to the land. People who lived here some twenty-five years ago remember the vast number of open ditches that have now given place to the underground system. As the main ditches were wide several children were drowned causing constant anxiety to mothers. Then there was great loss of the water supply through evaporation and seepage and much expense in keeping these ditches clean. It was advisable to put in the present pipe system, so today we have little idea of the vast amount of work this was to the few people living here and most of them with very little money.

I find in the account book of June 6, 1874, worked on the Semi-Tropical Co. ditch to the amount of \$103.40, which no doubt was his share of work at the time, although I remember well that they were so anxious to have the water brought to their land that every bit of time that could be spared with men or teams was spent without thinking whether each was contributing more than his share.

In 1876 the beloved wife died leaving him the care of the little family and two ranches to look after, twelve miles apart, Westminster and the one on East Chapman avenue, where the old stone or concrete house, which he built, sits a little back from the road.

During these years men teachers were very desirable and from 1873 to about 1890 he taught many terms of school in this part of what was then Los Angeles county, now Orange county. I am quite sure he was the first teacher of Fountain Valley district. He must drive where the distance was too far to walk and when it seemed best he took his small brood with him. When he taught in Fountain Valley, Old Newport, Centralia and Santiago districts, (now El Modena), they went along. One of the coldest, stormiest, winters we drove 24 miles a day from Westminster to the Santiago school on Lover's Lane, and return. Twelve miles on cold frosty mornings was no easy matter for small children. We must be up soon after four, chores must be done, a half a dozen cows milked, hogs and cattle fed, breakfast eaten and at the school house by 8:30 a. m. Twenty years were given to teaching in California, about two or three years near San Jose and the rest in Orange county. Besides his years in the school room he gave many as a trustee in what is now El Modena district. When the school house was moved from Lover's Lane to Modena, he offered to give the land on his own place for the school to have it near the center of the district.

but the vote decided to accept an offer made by David Hewes and so it was placed in Modena, later Earlham and now El Modena.

Nearest to my father's heart, probably, was the raisin industry that really started the interest in this part of Los Angeles county. My father and his cousins Robert and Stephen McPherson were very much interested in this business. Many things had been tried but markets were far away and perishable fruits could not stand long shipments even if freight rates were not prohibitive. The wine industry was more or less successful in some places but the New England consciences of these men would not allow them to make their living in that way. Oranges had been tried but markets were far, no refrigeration, not a fine grade of fruit and lots of scale with no knowledge of how to fight it. Olives were tried by a few but people preferred the southern European varieties, and again the scale. Raising grain meant only an occasional good crop among years of disappointment, but the raisin industry looked good, and along with this enterprising group were numberless others who became viticulturists.

What busy wonderful days those were. Men with money were glad to back the industry, help was needed and eastern friends and relatives were lured here to have a share in the work and the profits. McPherson, and more than that, Orange became thriving towns. El Modena was started by a group of Friends. Hundreds of houses were built and for a few years all was rosy and everybody making money—when the crash came. It was at the time of the depression of 1887 to about 1897. The eastern depression would have meant little here only that one day the men walked among their vines and saw a peculiar unhealthy look to the vine leaves and they knew there was something seri-

ous. The year 1886 had been one of paying off debts, putting up buildings, sending children away to school, and putting money in the bank.

But 1887 saw a change, the disease spread rapidly and by 1888 the vines were dead and the land must be cleared. Many people lost their holdings, there was little work and from being men of affairs the family must turn their attention to raising peas, and berries, dairying, raising chickens and doing anything to make an honest living.

Nothing daunted they tried again. They got help from Washington and N. B. Pierce was brought here to investigate. Vine diseases were studied in Italy and other southern counties of Europe, but to no avail, the grape industry was doomed. Muscat grapes were being shipped from here to eastern markets. On July 21, 1886, the first that were sent was a small shipment to Chicago which went from the vineyard of W. G. McPherson.

One of the most interesting and picturesque things about the work was the hundreds of jabbering Chinese going single file back and forth to their work. Everybody hired Chinese, who were quick and faithful at their work.

Another development about 1887 to 1890 was the railroads. The Southern Pacific was five miles away, the Santa Fe had entered Orange but was still too far from the busy center of this industry so the McPherson Bros., David Hewes and my father became very active in arousing interest in the railroads. I find the note in the account book where my father spent days and weeks in the interest of bringing the S. P. R. R. from the main line at the junction at Miraflores, south of Anaheim to Tustin, passing as it does through McPherson. The company demanded right of way and quite a sum of money. David Hewes and my father signed the notes and before the money was due people had lost so heavily that these two men had the most of it to pay.

At this same time the Orange, McPherson and Modena St. Railway Co., was put through and again my father was a generous stockholder. I also find the record of a gift of \$50 to the Orange City Library when Mr. and Mrs. Tener were effecting establishment. He was for many years a director in the Santa Ana Valley Irrigation Co., which is the Semi Tropical Water Co., to which he gave so much of his time to develop.

In 1880 Mr. McPherson was married to Miss Lydia Crane of Centralia, California, where he had been teaching, and a few years later because of her impaired health, at the doctor's suggestion, they built the concrete house and moved to the ranch near to what became a few years later the little town of McPherson. The place is now owned by Chas. A. Robinson. Mrs. McPherson was the aunt of Walter V. Crane, one of the good citizens of Orange.

There is little of thrilling interest in the journals of William Gregg McPherson but as old time history is in the air it was thought enough people would care for the story of the six months' walk by the side of the heavily loaded wagon drawn by an ox team to justify the publication of this one.

Four young men started from Illinois and walked together across the plains. Two of them had charge of the cooking and two the team and the wagon. It was a great satisfaction to my father that in all the long trip with its dust and heat, heavy labor and many discouragements there were no unkind feelings nor harsh words. Their great difference was over the iron stove which the cooks thought they must have and a book, a compilation of poems by Byron which my father brought with him all the way. He was told many times that the book was heavy and an unnecessary burden and he returned that cookstove was not a necessity as a campfire by the roadside was adequate. My fathers share

of the work was the care of the wagon and oxen, and with his partner of the wagons, to lift the heavy stove at each resting place. Neither was willing to give in so with the best of feeling, the stove and the book made the trip and the book was a manna to my father's hunger for the printed page.

They did not travel on the Sabbath Day (Sunday) knowing it was good for man and beast to rest. I believe the story tells of a little deviation but only as an emergency. There were many starving Indians, the people crossing the plains had killed the buffalo and other game and they were having a serious time. They would come and watch with hungry eyes the food which was none too abundant for the travelers. If it were possible a biscuit would be shared for they were very fond of the American's "bissy-cake" as they called it. If an ox died from exhaustion, before it had stopped quivering, the Indians would have it cut up and eaten as they were too hungry to wait to have it cooked. Before long the animal would be surrounded by crowds of Indians, divided and eaten. While in their desperation and sometimes unkind treatment, whole trains were massacred, yet by kindly treatment these young men had no trouble.

These young men had started for Pike's Peak, but the Pike's Peak "boom" had "busted" by the time they reached there. Notwithstanding, these vigorous young travelers had set their faces westward so decided to try their fortunes in California. They traveled together until they got near California, divided their interests in a friendly and satisfactory manner, each went his own way, my father to Marysville and thence to Downleville and the others he never knew just where for he never heard of them again.

William Gregg McPherson died at his ranch home, April 29, 1908. He had been in the field and had reached the house when the call of the Heavenly Visitor came, and he slipped from life as he would have wished from the every day activities to the other world.

He was born in the town of Lyme, Jefferson county, New York and was the 7th child of a family of thirteen boys and girls, born to Hugh and Betsy Butterfield who in the year 1819 had driven perhaps also with an ox team from the home to which they had moved when they were married in Deering, New Hampshire in 1810, according to family records, and that given in the history of Goffstown, N. H. by George Plummer Hadley. Goffstown was the home of Betsy and Hugh lived in Deering.

William lived in Downieville among the mines until 1864. He had served in the California Battalion of the Civil War and was made First Lieutenant. Only one battalion was allowed to leave California as there was fear of trouble here. In 1864 the mines had paid quite well and Mr. McPherson returned to his home in New York state by way of Panama. He visited his people and then went to Chicago to be married to the girl of his choice Harriett Elizabeth Crowell in Chicago, Ill., July 3, 1864 on Sabbath p. m. With his bride he again visited his people and returned by way of the Isthmus to California.

They made their home 10 miles above Downieville where the mines were located. The trail that they traveled was a dangerous one and their work hazardous and after six years more in the mines that became a losing game they moved to Timbuctoo and then to leave the mines and go back to the teaching that had been part of the occupation of his early life.



The Ides of March was ushered in with a driving wind accompanied with rain and sleet piercing every nook and corner admonishing all to seek shelter from the merciless blast. It is a season of the year when we expect severe weather, but this has been rather more bolsterous than usual and has continued its severity up to the middle of April. The wind has blown almost incessantly, and the sun obscured by clouds which yielded their aqueous burden to the attraction of gravitation which fell in copious showers at short intervals. Snow, hail and sleet were thrown in occasionally to fill out the programme. Such a cold windy rainy disagreeable spring has never come within the memory of that venerable person, the oldest inhabitant.

The all absorbing topic of the day is about the new ElDorado. About a year ago gold was found at Pikes Peak by a company who went out to prospect the country. Gold was found and reported to their friends who went out to try their luck at mining. The news spread gradually, and by September quite a number of hardy adventurers were seeking gold in the vicinity of the peak. They sent back glowing accounts of the prospects of making fortunes rapidly in the mines. The accounts came thick and fast. Editors gave way to the mania and you could scarcely take up a paper without meeting accounts of the glittering metal on every page. Everybody was up in arms to go to the "Peak." Some of the more considerate, however, could see a bear in the way. If they had no wife or family they would go, others would go if they had a wife. Some would go if they had not so much money to take care of, others if they had more. So it was very easy to find a lion in the streets.

But ere the winter was half spent their expectations received a cold bath in the way of unfavorable accounts from those who had been unsuccessful in the mining district. They reported that there was gold, but not in quantities sufficient to pay for the trouble of getting. Some could make but 50 per diem and work hard.

There had been more controversy more conflicting statements than in a presidential campaign. Some denounced it as a grand humbug and swindle, others represented it as being richer and better digging than California. They must be people varying greatly in point of judgment or the most egregious liars that ever went unhung.

In view of the variety of opinions I have concluded to go and investigate the thing for myself and have gone in with a company of four. We fitted out with teams and provisions for six months and should have started April 4th if the weather had permitted.

After a lapse of about four weeks from the time first appointed for starting, we got under way with the prospect of a long and tedious journey before us, but with buoyant spirits and a settled determination to make the best of it and enjoy ourselves as well as times and circumstances will admit. The 28th of April, 1859 is an eventful day in our calendar either for good or evil, which it is to be, time alone can tell. In view of the conflicting statements as to the prospects of finding gold, the wet stormy and disagreeable weather together with the opposition of public opinion, it required considerable energy and determination to face so many drawbacks. But I hold that where it requires so much self will and perserverance to get into difficulty that the

same qualities perservered in, will bring him out all right in the end. And I think in the present case, if there is only a moderate amount of gold there, we shall stand a chance of getting a share. We are under many obligations to the people of Oregon, for their many acts of kindness and especially to Strong Marshall.

The first day was cool and pleasant, the sun was partially obscured by flying clouds, but upon the whole seemed a propitious journey. We drove about 14 miles the first day. The roads were much better than we expected and continued good until we got about a days drive in Iowa. Then we found the sloughs long and deep for about two days, it rained during the time, which made it still worse traveling. The rest of the way to Iowa City it was pleasant and good travelling with the exception of its being hilly. The Iowa prairies are considerably rolling and of rather a heavy clay soil, but rich, and take it one year with another produces better than lighter and quicker soils.

We cross the Wapirponicón at Buena Vista, it is a small stream about 240 feet across. We struck off then for Cedar Bluffs, and there crossed the Cedar river, this river is about 600 feet across and a very pretty stream with a beautiful pebbly beach. We have driven 10 days and made 135 miles. We encamped here the 7th about the middle of the afternoon, and turned the cattle out to graze, to lay over until Monday. Our tent is pitched in a beautiful location. There is a nice stream running in front of the tent, a cool spring of water about 3 rods distant. There are high rolling banks in every direction covered with luxurious grass.

9th. We struck our tent and started about 7 o'clock in the morning. The air was cool and a dense fog was hanging over, which was almost like rain. The road was hard and considerably hilly and about half way through timber. We camped at 5 o'clock, near a ravine. It was a very good place for camping, good feed and plenty of water.

10th. Today we crossed a handsome prairie about 11 miles across. The road was level and good, the best we have had, but in the afternoon our route lay along the timber, it was very abrupt and hilly which made rather hard traveling. We camped about three miles from Millersburg

after traveling about 36 miles in two days.

11th. It rained in the morning, so we did not get started till a quarter past 8. The road was very hilly and sharp pitches. We crossed Deep creek after noon, it is a small muddy stream and empties into Deep river which sinks a few miles from the confluence. We camped about 5 miles east of Montezuma together with Columbus Marshall. The evening was clear and pleasant, but we were awakened in the morning by a heavy wind and rain. It came so unexpected and sudden that we had not time to ditch the tent, so we had to ditch it in the rain. It only lasted about two hours, but it soaked the ground up so we didn't start until 10 o'clock and drove about two miles beyond Montezuma. We passed some sloughs near town and some steep hills. Friday the wind shifted to the north and blew cold and chilly. We got an early start and drove about 18 miles. The country was hilly part of the way through timber, some very good, but most of it openings. Our lead oxen was not standing the journey very well and corn being \$1 a bushel we

concluded to put on more teams and depend upon grass which is very high but has grown so fast that there is not much substance to it. Ebbert bought a pair of seven-year-old oxen for \$75, the same that we paid for the other two yoke. Passed through Lynville and camped about five miles from town on the open prairie.

Saturday started for the often heard of and long dreaded skunk bottoms and reached it about 1:30 o'clock. It is a wide bottom of a little more than a mile across and in high water they are overflowing, but now the river is just within the banks. The soil is a sticky blue clay with quicksand in places. It is rightly named skunk bottoms for it ought to have a name to correspond to the place, and it is the meanest, lowest, contemptible place that I ever got into.

Sunday, May 15th. We are camped near Skunk river in the edge of the timber. The land is very rolling and the soil clay. It has rained most of the forenoon by showers, the wind is northeast and rather cold. The rain continued all day and most part of the night it rained very heavy.

16. It was so wet and muddy that we laid by till 12 and then drove 14 miles. The roads were mostly level. We camped about a mile from Prairie City.

17. Started at twenty minutes past six. The roads were hard and level and across the largest and best prairie I have seen. Prairie City is a small town about 10 miles from timber, surrounded by a rich prairie, but thinly inhabited. Our route had been most of the time away from the principal travel, but about noon we came into the Fort Des Moines road at Apple Grove and fell in with about 30 teams.

We met five teams returning, some had been through, but most of them turned about on the road. Drove 17 miles and camped near the rising sun.

18. Started at six, passed through fort Des Moines about 10, received there the most flattering accounts. A man returned, who had been to the mines himself and brother had dug \$3700 worth during winter.

1970 teams had crossed the bridge at Des Moines up to the 18th.

Was a man well known and generally believed. A company had just started taking a saw mill and blacksmith, took upwards of 20 pair of cattle, six horses and 14 men with an excellent outfit.

19th. Started at 6:30 a. m., crossed the Coon at Adel and drove about four miles beyond. We met 50 teams returning. The excitement is getting intense. They are turning about at all points on the road. Some had been near the peak, some to Fort Kearney. They would meet friends returning, who advised them not to go. They would turn back with raths and imprecations upon all who got up the excitement.

20th. It rained a little, but we hitched up and drove about two hours when it came on to rain and laid over. There has been more teams returned than went on. Two men laid over a while, who had been to the peak, prospected 15 days and scarcely found the color. The most, they had known to have been taken out in a day was 8 cents worth. They say the whole crowd is returning and have shot two or three of the leaders who got up the excitement. They had forged letters by counterfeiting writing and sending for folks to come out immediately.

Sunday, May 22nd. Was camped about 18 miles from the North Coon in a ravine with good feed, little wood and poor water. It was a clear, pleasant day. Lots of teams were passing homeward bound.

23rd. Started at 6 with a cool fresh breeze. We took the ridge road, it is very high and uneven and winds about in a perfect serpentine course. The country we are passing through is unsettled and probably will be for a long time. The prairie is very rolling or rather hilly. We have passed no timber and seen none to amount to anything, only a few scattering trees. The wind is blowing a perfect gale. It rained very heavy at noon, camped at half past 6.

24th. It rained a little in the morning, but we got an early start and traveled about 20 miles and camped at 6 about a mile from Lewis and 50 miles from the Bluffs.

#### RIVER IS FORDED

25th. Started before six, crossed the Neshnobotony in the morning and at night crossed the west branch. Drove about 25 miles. The road followed the circuit of the ridge winding about among the knobs whose green sloping banks and irregular shapes reminds me of the lakes in a storm.

26th. It commenced raining before daylight and kept it up nearly all day. Our tent was pitched in a low level place and not ditched so it came very near drowning us out. The wind was in the northwest. It is the most uncomfortable, disagreeable day we have had on the road.

27th. Got an early start and drove to the Bluffs, 25 miles. The roads were good until within about four miles of town. Then it was steep bluffs and hard pulling. Course we have been four weeks and two days on the road and drove a distance of 400 miles. Our team kept up good. We drove slow in

the start, turned out early and laid by Sundays. Council Bluffs is a small town situated in a ravine or rather opening in the bluffs. It is about three miles from the river. Omaha, the capital of Nebraska is a town of about the same size but pleasantly situated. The banks are not as high and ascend more regular. The capitol is on the highest point and shows off to good advantage.

#### PROVISIONS REPLENISHED

30th. We replenished our stock of provisions at the Bluffs having bought as cheap as could be done in Illinois. Our load now is about 1,000 pounds, about 1200 provisions.

Tuesday, May 31st. Crossed the Missouri and resumed our march toward the rocky mountains. The Missouri is a muddy turbid water. The country was rolling but the hills were high, but not as steep as in Iowa. Some wood among the streams.

Wednesday. Started at 6 and drove to Elkhorn. It is the handsomest country we have seen yet. The prairie is high and gradually undulating, surrounded by small groves scattered about, over the prairie which presents most of the sameness of most of the prairies here. The soil is clay mixed with loam and very rich, the only objection is scarcity of good timber.

The Elkhorn is a large creek of muddy water. We crossed it to come directly onto the Platte bottom which lies between the two streams. It is quite low where we first went into it but rises gradually as you proceed to the west. There is a high bank and rolling prairie to the right of one stream and left of the other diverging to the west leaving this plain between which looks really beautiful.



**CAMPED ON BANKS**

June 2nd. Passed two Pawnee villages and Fremont in the morning. Our route lay along the Platte but could not see its waters. Camped on its banks. It is upwards of a mile wide and no place less than half a mile. It is deep, rapid and almost as muddy as the Missouri. The banks are clay and wash continually. Met 33 teams in three days.

3rd. Crossed several bad sloughs but the road was perfectly level and has been ever since we crossed the Elkhorn. Left the California road three miles from Shinns Ferry. Drove down to it and camped. It is 70 miles from Omaha. It seems lonesome here, we left a train of about 30 teams and drove on a road but little traveled all alone.

4th. Crossed the Platte this morning.  
**DIFFICULT TO FERRY**

It is a very bad stream to ferry. It is wide and a quick sand bottom. The current changes several times a day so there is no depending on. Where they ferried the day before, we forded and where they forded, we could not get through. We had to drive off the boat in a stiff current where the sand would wash from under the oxen's feet, so as to let them down. We forded about 80 rods but could not go straight across. We got into a ripple and followed it down. The sand washed from under the oxen and wheels so fast that they came very near stopping, but they were frightened and we whipped them up sharp and brought it out not exactly frightened but considerably excited. The boats worked badly. The south bank is about 30 feet high, about 15

feet of soil and sand and the rest a real blue clay. After raising to the top of the bank we came onto a level table land about 4 miles across, then back of that another bluff and rolling prairie. All the timber we can see is on the islands. There is a bluff on each side of the river a few miles back running parallel with it the whole distance as far as we have been having the appearance at some period of seeing the river bank. The country is sparsely settled and here on Elm creek, there is one sod house, several living in tents.

#### CAMPED ON CREEK

Met 25 teams the last three days. We are camped for Sunday on Elm creek, about 10 miles from the ferry. We are laying over to wash for the first time since we started. We make awkward work of it. The wind blows hard and chilly. It has been cool weather all the time and the nights cold, which has been favorable for us, but rather bad for those who were returning from Cherry Creek with everything on their back, and could take but one blanket and have to sleep on the cold ground which was damp and heavy dews, the nights cold and windy. It was enough to try a man to have to get up with such fare after a hard day's travel.

Monday, June 6th. Started at six with a pleasant prospect before us but took the road next to the bluffs. It was rather crooked and some places rolling, but the greatest difficulty was the want of water, we got some for the cattle about noon, but had none ourselves until the next morning. We drove until 4 o'clock, then turned out and was so much more thirsty than hungry that we laid down without supper. The next morning Dec went about one and one-half miles back in the bluffs and found a pool which

answer for committee. And such coffee, the most delicious wines were never more palatable. We gave the cattle a good rest and drove to the Platte. It is about 33 miles over this road without water, but by keeping the river road it is plentiful. The Platte here is upwards of a mile across. The bluffs run nearly parallel with the river on both sides and from five to seven miles distant. The road on the North side runs right along the river, and there are teams strung along as far as we can see about two-thirds of the California emigration takes that side of the river.

#### PASS VILLAGE RUINS

Passed the remains of an Indian village near the road, was upwards of 50 horses' skulls arranged in a circle, probably surrounding the remains of some chief's favorite pony.

8th. Last night was the first we had to stand guard. The mosquitos were so plentiful that we nor the cattle could get any rest. They have been very bad ever since we came onto this side of the river. Met two acquaintances from Ohio by the name of Cockran. They gave an unfavorable account of the mines.

9th. Got an early start and drove 20 miles and camped at 4.

11th. Arrived at Fort Kearney and drove about 3 miles beyond and camped over Sunday. The place consists of about 25 buildings arranged so as to enclose a square. Inside is another square park mounted with cannon. I saw but four good dwelling houses, the rest were store houses, arsenals, stables, shops, etc. The dwelling houses were mostly built of sod, roof and all. It is situated about one-half way between the river and

bluffs. Since we have been camped here a government train has passed consisting of 156 wagons and 180 men and 1872 oxen drawing supplies to Utah. It is astonishing to see the amount of men and cattle traveling over these roads going to Oregon, California, New Mexico, Arizona and some for the Peak, but the largest part goes to California, which will probably amount to 50,000 persons. Whether California can stand that immigration or not is more than I can tell. We have been traveling in the Antelope and Elk country the past week and now are in the buffalo and jack rabbit country. Buffalos are very thick. Traveled 110 miles this week, are 190 from Omaha.

#### SEE BUFFALO HERDS

Monday 13th. Vamoosed the ranch at half past five o'clock, drove about 18 miles and camped on the Platte. The road is completely lined with buffalo carcasses that have been killed for sport. The hides are good for nothing now. The hills are completely covered with them.

14 and 15. Continued along the Platte. The road is level with some wet places. Have had wood most of the time, but had to use buffalo chips a few times. We have camped alone this week and tied the oxen to the wagon.

16th. It rained very heavy last night with extremely sharp lightning and heavy reports. In the morning, just as we were turning out from breakfast, we saw two buffaloes coming across the river towards the camp. We snatched our guns and started for them. The head one got so far ahead that they all broke for the other and fired a whole volley into him, he

only made a few jumps. A few of us followed the other. He got considerable of a start, but two men on mules kept him at bay, so we could come up pretty near when he would break and leave us. We could keep just near enough to make it exciting. They got several shots that wounded him, but could not bring him down. We run about five miles when he began to grow weak from loss of blood and turned about so as to bring him broadside to me. I gave him a shot just back of the fore shoulder when he fell. It being the first we had been after, made us anxious to get a shot at him. It is fine sport hunting them, they are so tenacious of life and when hard pressed, will turn and fight desperately.

#### MAKE EARLY START

17th. Started early and passed Cottoouwood Springs before noon. It was quite a treat to get some good water after using the muddy water of the Platte so long. It is 85 miles from Hearnay. Camped on a small stream had good water and a pleasant place to camp.

18th. Started at six o'clock, it was cool in the morning, but it soon got up to a fever heat. The hottest day we have had. Arrived at Fremont Springs at four o'clock, the water is excellent. Drove over O'Fallins bluffs and camped two miles west. Drove 125 miles this week.

Monday, June 20th. Started at nine o'clock and went in with a train for California. The roads were good, feed poor and no timber. Had a heavy rain, the first we have had to drive in. Camped on the south fork of the Platte at six. The south fork mingles its waters with the main Platte a little below Fremont Springs. It is about a half mile wide.

## ANSWER MESS CALL

21st. Were routed at half past five by the captain's calling out, turn out boys, one from every mess and drive up. The cattle rolled out at six and camped on the Platte with tolerable feed.

We have turned with the greatest reluctance for California, because we could not go to the Peak and then get through to California, but would have to turn home, which is not in accordance with our feelings. It is established beyond doubt that a few are making something, but it is in the mountains where they can work but about three months in a year. It is found in crevices and they are like angel's visits few and far between.

22nd. Drove up to the crossing at 9 o'clock. It is 45 miles from O'Fallons bluffs and 165 from Kearney. The river was high and fording difficult, but the ferry could not take wagons across and charged an exorbitant price for freight so we had nothing to do but to try the ford. We raised the box on buffalo skulls and placed the provisions on top of the box and doubled teams and drove in, the bottom was middling good and by winding about got through very well, but some of them had to swim their cattle, and one wagon capsized. Camped on the north bank at the crossing.

23rd. Struck across to the North Platte. The prairie lies high and rises gradually till within about two miles of the river when we had to descend it all at once into a ravine being nearly perpendicular. After locking

both wheels it would drive the wagon onto the cattle. The ravine is called Ash Hollow, on either side is rough craggy rocks forming a wild scenery. Camped about a mile from the hollow, having driven about 22 miles. The main Platte is about double the width of the south fork and equally as swift and muddy and full of sand bars.

26th. Drove half a day and camped near a clear cold spring of as good water as can be found on the road. Are about 65 miles from the crossing and have driven a hundred and ten miles this week. The roads for the last 45 miles has been loose sand and heavy dragging on the cattle. The feed is poor, but the bench grass on the bluffs is the best. It is more hearty and the cattle like it better. The water along the bottom is impregnated with alkali and so strongly that it kills a great many cattle. It is colored as highly as it would be if drained through a barrel of ashes.

#### ENCOUNTER SANDY ROADS

Monday, June 27th. The roads were considerably sandy and heavy wheeling. Passed court house rock about noon and could see chimney rock, a distance of 27 miles. It was so far off we did not visit it, though it is quite a curiosity. It looks to be about a mile from the road, but is said to be a common deception in looking at the bluffs. But the greatest curiosity of all is chimney rock which we passed the morning of the 25th. It looked as large when we first saw it as it did when we were within a mile, then it seemed to expand all at once and show its rough unhewn points to good advantage. It is situated in a valley surrounded by high bluffs nearly perpendicular and mostly barren. It is not rock but clay and sand forming a cement which resists the

actions of the rains and weather nearly as well as sand rock. The lower part is in the form of a cone from one-half to three-fourths of a mile in circumference and so steep that it is difficult to climb and in many places impossible. It rises, I should think about three hundred feet and on the apex of the cone is a column upwards of a hundred feet in height and less than 58 feet through one way and double that distance the other. Its sides are perpendicular and rather rough. There is a crevice running from side to side, and when standing upon the highest bench looks as though it was hanging over our heads and just ready to tumble down. While standing upon the upper bench (which has to be climbed by means of grooves cut for both feet and hands) and contemplating the column above and the vast distance below a person is struck more with a feeling of wonder and awe than when looking down the abyss at Niagara Falls. If it was in the states where it could be visited by railway or a steamboat, it would be thronged with visitors.

#### PASS OVER BLUFFS

29th. Passed over Scotts bluffs. They are very high and abrupt, the roads winds about in the gullies worn by the water which has left knobs scattered about like huge rocks.

30th. The roads have been sandy somewhat hilly and hard on the cattle's feet. The days have been very hot, but the nights cool and when we get a breeze from the mountains, it is cool. The feed has been very poor ever since we struck the North Platte. Alkali is very bad. We have passed 100 head of dead cattle in a day and for a week have hardly been out of sight of them.



Saturday, July 2nd. Crossed Laramie fork on a bridge. The stream is about a 100 feet across and very rapid. Drove about eight miles beyond the fort and are laying over on good feed. There is some timber on the islands and a few scattering cedars on the bluffs. Nearly all we have seen since we left O'Fallons bluffs. The Platte here is not more than 40 rods across but deep and rapid and clearer and cooler than below. Fort Laramie is situated on Laramie fork bottom near its junction with the Platte. There are two good trading establishments, one good dwelling house, but most of the rest are government—Labonte creek 60 miles above Laramie and one and one-half miles below, west side.

Drove about 113 miles this week. We are laying over for Sunday and going through with the camp duties such as cooking, washing and other like duties attendant upon traveling over this barren wilderness.

#### IN WILD COUNTRY

We are now in the midst of a wild and picturesque scenery. The Black Hills lie to the North and West and rear their gigantic peaks to the clouds like some tall giant frowning upon smaller things which he could crush beneath his massive bulk. The scattering cedars upon their top and sides at a distance give them a black appearance.

Monday, July 4th. Turned out at 3:00 o'clock and fired a salute of 35 guns, just to remind us of the scenes that were being enacted at home. It was very warm and our road was among the Black Hills. The hills were high and steep with a coarse gravel which made it bad on the oxen's feet. Being so hot and dusty we were nearly exhausted when we found a good camping ground on the bitter Cotton Wood springs.

5th. Started at six o'clock. We had to go over one large hill or rather several hills piled one on top of another. We baited at eleven in a beautiful basin by the sides of a splendid spring. In coming into the valley on the left it is rather bluff, but to the right is the Black Hills rising one peak above another running in lines the sides steep, but smooth and covered with cedars farther to the North it is more sloping banks covered with green grass. The river runs through it on the east side.

#### VARIETY OF SCENERY

There is such a variety of scenery with such striking contrasts that it looks really picturesque. Camped at five on Horse Shoe creek with very poor feed.

6th. Drove about 12 miles and stopped to shoe an ox that had gotten tender footed, shod him with leather.

7th. Drove about 10 miles and camped on Labonte creek a clear rippling stream running over small boulders and gravel. Passed Laramie peak before noon. The road has been very hilly, some long, some steep and some both long and steep. Prospected on several creeks for gold, merely found the color and that was so fine that it was difficult to tell whether it was gold or not.

8th. Had an ox take sick and turned him loose. Think he is alkali-d.

9th. Camped on Box Elder creek to lay over Sunday. Had a tremendously heavy thunder shower just before camping. Feed is so poor and eat off so much that we have to drive our cattle from one to two miles back to get feed, we then find very good, but it is a good deal of trouble. Water is good and plenty throughout the hills, never having to drive more than 10 miles without finding a good spring. Cattle are scattered along the road

thick, having got alkali'd on the Platte, then hard driving kills them. Have drove only 85 miles this week.

#### DRIVE TO PLATTE

Monday, July 11th. Started at six o'clock and drove to the Platte in an hour and a half, having driven just a week in the Black hills since leaving the river, camped on Muddy creek after driving 19 miles.

12th. Crossed the Platte bridge in the afternoon. It is 125 miles from Laramie. Drove for several days along side of a high regular ridge.

13th. Kept up the Platte 18 miles from the bridge and camped on it at Red Butte for the last time. When we struck the river first it was upwards of a mile and a half broad. We have followed it for six weeks and a day, traveled a distance of 663 miles and find it not more than 20 rods wide and as muddy as it could be made by stirring it with a pole.

The Red Buttes are two high, steep bluffs opposite each other, composed of a red rock and soil. At the rising of the moon it looked really beautiful.

14th. Drove to Willow Springs, 15 miles. They are situated in a narrow valley with high hills on three sides. The springs are large and good water, camped early and drove the cattle about two miles to a spring near the top of a mountain and found good feed. This seems to be an intermediate between the Black Hills and Rocky Mountains, it is high, rolling sandy prairie.

**HEAD FOR ROCKIES**

15th. Drove to the Sweet Water about 22 miles and 55 from the Bridge. Camped close by Independant rock. It has the appearance of a large boulder about 40 rods long and 100 feet high. It is smooth and nicely rounded. The Sweet Water is a small and rapid stream about 40 feet wide. Here we strike into the outskirts of the Rocky Mountains. There are ranges running in various directions composed of hard ragged rocks, very steep and terminating at an edge. Some, however, are smooth and regularly rounded. In these ranges there are numerous peaks rearing their heads to the clouds and seemingly pointing to the great creator as the supreme architect, of the universe. About five miles from Independence Rock is the Devil's Gate, considered the grandest sight along the route. It is an opening in a rocky range just wide enough for the Sweet Water to run and confines its water to about half its usual width. The rocks rise on both sides to a height of about 430 feet, one side is perpendicular and seems to even hang over the river, the other side slopes back a little. It is about a half mile through. About 80 rods to the south the road runs through a similar opening only the rocks are sloping back. These rocky peaks and ranges seem to protrude from a sandy prairie. There are a few isolated peaks scattered about surrounded by a sandy soil and almost destitute of vegetation, except sage brush.

**NEW WAGON BOUGHT**

16th. Drove about 15 miles. Bought a good new wagon for \$25.00. Camped on the river, a tributary of the Platte.

17th. Went to work in the morning to fix the wagon and repack and found an axle broke, so we had to go to work at that together with the rest of the fixing kept us hard at work all day. Have driven upwards of 100 miles this week. The roads have been very uneven and some of the way sandy. Thunder showers are frequent, occurring nearly every day.

Monday 18th. Started at 8 o'clock, 19 miles. The days are warm when the sun shines, the breezes are cool and the nights are really chilly.

19th. Crossed the Sweet Water three times in a pass between two high rocky ranges. Drove about 16 miles and camped on the Sweet Water. The feed was poor, we could see snow about 15 miles to the left.

20th. Started at seven and drove 16 miles without water and camped at four on the Sweet Water. There was plenty of snow to be seen ahead on the Wind river range. The roads are good the first 30 miles were sandy but they are level enough to travel easy. The air is very light and at times difficult to breathe.

#### CAMPED AT SPRINGS

21st. Camped on the Sweet Water at noon, then left it. The roads take over very high rocky wild looking ranges. On the top of the highest mountain are the Three Suds lakes. The water has a white appearance and a flat taste. It is not good to use. Camped at a spring about 10 miles from the river.

22nd. Drove about 12 miles and nooned on the Sweet Water. There took a new road the government cut off. It is the northern route and 240 miles to the — cut off. Drove about

seven miles on the new road, had good water and feed. The road is good and level but gravel. Vegetation is poor on the hills consisting of sage brush and moss. The rock is very hard like boulders mixed considerably with quartz. We are right at the foot of the Wind river range. They are about three miles distant, very steep-rugged with scattering pines on the sides. The nights are very chilly. It rains about every day and on the mountains most of the time. Thunder showers come up very sudden. Feed is good and plenty and snow water running in most every ravine.

23rd. Crossed the Sweet Water for the last time. It is a clear, narrow rapid stream running down the rocks with a scenery nearly equal to the Devil's Gate. Drove about 11 miles and laid over till Sunday noon. We shall then drive 10 miles to the Little Sandy, making this week a hundred and twenty miles.

The Little Sandy is a beautiful stream. It is narrow, deep and rapid, clear and cold composed mostly of snow water. Passed the summit of the Rocky Mountains just before reaching the Little Sandy.

25th. Drove 15 miles to Big Sandy and nooned. The road descended very fast. In the afternoon drove ten miles over a good level road to Grass Springs. Had plenty of water and feed.

26th. Drove 18 miles without water or feed and camped on New Fork of Green river. The hills were long, but not steep and a gravel soil.

27th. Drove five miles to Green river. It possesses all the beauties of the mountain streams together with a beautiful green tint. There were a number of islands that divided the streams, so we had to cross five currents. Nooned here and drove 13 miles to Willow Creek. We have been traveling two days between two ranges of snowy peaks which makes the days cool and the nights cold.

28th. Laid over to let the cattle fill up, it being good feed.

29th. Drove 12 miles and laid over the remainder of the day, and the next on account of a lame ox in the company.

#### SNOW-CROWNED PEAKS

Sunday the 31st. Drove to within a mile of Fort Snyder. We drove about 10 miles in Rinez canyon. It is just wide enough for the road and creek with mountains of perpetual snow rising abrupt on either side. We found ripe strawberries in the valley and within 2 hours ate snow on the mountains. Crowell and Voltz killed a black bear here today. Drove 85 miles this week.

Monday, Aug. 1st. Drove about 9 miles over the mountains to Laharge creek. It rained so we had to lay over 2nd. Drove on but it was slippery and steep so that it was almost impossible to get over the mountains. Went over three peaks today. They were so steep that with three pair of cattle and 1000 lbs. of freight they could scarcely move and going down we had to lock both wheels and then hold on to the wagon. Camped on Smith's creek with plenty of good wood and water, but no feed, except willow and they were so high and thick that it was impossible to guard the cattle, so let them run.

3rd. The cattle were scattered about in the mountains in the willows so that it took till about 10 o'clock to get started. Drove about 5 miles down the creek then struck back into the mountains again, had seven miles of mountains worse than ever, rough rock and steep. Drove about 4 miles in Salt creek valley and camped with the cattle badly worn, foot sore and hungry, are laying over with the intention of driving eight on across the valley, timber is plenty, handsome spruce, some pine and balsam.

#### GOOD FEED PLENTIFUL

Aug. 5th. Laid over in Salt creek valley, had good feed. It is a large valley with good feed which will be a half-way house for weary travelers in crossing the mountains.

6th. Drove about 15 miles and camped a little above Salt valley. At the 3rd crossing of Salt creek in the canyon are salt springs, very strongly impregnated with salt. The ground is crusted over with from one-fourth to several inches thick.

7th. Drove about 18 miles, part of the way over the mountains, but a very good road for a mountain road. Camped in a small valley. We have crossed the last mountain.

Drove about 80 miles this week. The road is uneven and hilly, but easy on the cattle.

#### CAMP ON CREEK

8th. Drove about 25 miles and camped on Blackfoot creek in a large valley.

9th. Drove about 18 miles and camped on a small creek with good feed. We are yet surrounded by snowy peaks, but the road follows the valleys and ravines. The night of the 7th it froze water about one-third of an inch thick. 8th froze water.



9th (probably 10th) We are laying over to rest the cattle and shoe some and recruit some lame ones. It does not rain so much now as when near the summit.

11th. Drove eight miles and nooned on the old Fort Hall road the end of our 240 miles on Gilbert's cut-off. Drove about eight miles farther and camped at the foot of a snowy peak. The wind blew a gale and the dust was very deep and light so that in passing through the canyon it was almost impossible to breathe.

12th. Drove 20 miles and camped on Lewis or Snake river, it is about 80 feet wide, 4 feet deep and clear, handsome stream. Close by were some very large springs forming quite a creek.

13th. Drove 20 miles and camped at a late hour on Lewis river.

#### GET LATE START

14th. Got a late start and drove about 12 miles and laid over. About 11 o'clock passed American falls. The water seems to be capering among rough ragged rocks running smooth over some, taking a shoot over others, then taking a final leap of about 20 feet. The whole fall is about 50 feet. The rock is porous and some hard and some soft, so the water has worn it into curious shapes leaving pillars of rock standing, some standing on the small end with broad top. Take it all in all, it is the most wild and picturesque scenery of the kind I ever saw. Drove 108 miles, feed and roads good, but very dusty.

Monday, Aug. 15th. Drove 12 miles and camped on a creek full of trout and cascades falling from two to 15 feet. It is a beautiful stream.

16th. Laid, feed was excellent.

17. Drove eight miles to Raft creek, baited and drove two miles and camped.

18th. Drove 12 miles and laid over on Raft creek. Good feed. We are within about eight miles of Sublett's cutoff.

It will take just four weeks on the new road of about 840 miles and laid over eight and one-half days. The roads were good excepting about 40 miles in the mountains which were very bad.

#### BOY IS HANGED

Passed a grave at the junction of the road of a boy of 17 who was hanged at the end of a wagon tongue for murder. In a canyon only a few miles from here a man was shot on guard and a train murdered by Indians, four killed, one man and a woman wounded. The particulars of both cases not well known. The canyon was narrow and a thicket of poplars on both sides to cover them until the train came up then took them unawares. The soldiers had had a fight with the Indians and killed 80 near here.

20th. Were camped about four miles beyond the junction of the roads in a canyon of the Goose creek mountains. They are a high range of mountains with snow near their peaks. They are as high as the Rocky Mountains, but not as rough, the sides are steep but smooth. We passed into a large valley then into a ravine passed over a spur then into the Salt Lake road near Steeple Rocks. They are high rocks, some like huge boulders, others running to a point some with one stone piled on top of another, just ready to fall. Came into the Salt

Lake road 30 miles after coming into the Sublett's cut-off. Drove 27 miles over as good and gradually ascending a road as though it had been graded.

#### HIT BAD TRAIL

21st. Drove 16 miles, seven of it as bad as any in the Rocky Mountains. Some were so sidling that it took all hands to keep the wagon right side up. It was over sharp irregular peaks. Are camped on Goose creek about two miles up.

Drove about 45 miles this week.

Monday, 22nd. Left Table Rock and drove 15 miles up Goose creek to within two miles of its head.

23rd. Got an early start and drove six miles to springs. Took dinner, so early cattle would not drink. Drove to Thousand springs, they are splendid springs coming out of rocks. Intended to camp near, but found no feed, drove the length of valley, nine miles and turned out in the road without water or feed. Next morning hitched up as soon as light, drove six miles to water so poor the cattle wouldn't drink. Drove six miles farther and found feed and water. Arrived at nine o'clock after driving 40 miles. Without feed or water, the roads were excellent with a few exceptions of rocky hills. The road runs between two ranges of low mountains. The nights are cool. 22nd it froze water.

25th. Michigan boys lost oxen. Drove about a mile beyond the—Bolling Springs. They cover about an acre of ground. The water boils up all over this space. In some places it is hot enough to burn. The roads were level. Camped in a canyon at Cold Springs.

26th. Crossed a mountain. The road was good for a mountain road. At the forks, took the left hand road and camped at Humboldt Springs. Last

two cows that belonged to the train supposed to be alkalied.

27th. Nooned at St. Mary's Wells. They are about the size of a rock and we could not find bottom. The train at night coming within a mile of the right hand road drove to and camped behind some willows. Elbert and I coming with two lame oxen, supposed the train ahead kept on up to the mountains, then turned back and found camp about 10 o'clock. Next day we drove the cattle across to the other road and found the train waiting for us near the first crossing of the Humboldt.

The river is formed from numerous mountain streams uniting near here to form the main river. These creeks have wide bottoms covered with luxuriant grass. The upland has good bunch grass. Feed is the most abundant here of any place we have sage brush, grease wood plenty. Timber is altogether out of the question in this region of country. Are 26 miles from Humboldt Springs. Have driven 110 miles this week.

Aug. 29th. Followed down the river with good roads and plenty of feed.

30th. Crossed the river four times today and are camped a mile below Cold creek. The mountains are high and to the left covered with snow, to the right the mountains are lower. Today we have followed down the river, the bottom is narrower and the mountains high, rocky and steep, at the second ford the Humboldt is about 30 feet wide.

#### HARD DAY'S DRIVE

Thursday, Sept. 1st. The road took over the mountains a distance of 17 miles. It followed in a canyon most of the way. It was a hard day's drive being steep, rough and stony. There

was considerable bunch grass and water after passing the summit, about two miles. Camped at Gravelly ford.

2nd. Started after noon crossed the river and took the north side road. It is the most level.

3rd. Drove till noon. The roads are excellent. The bottoms wide, good grass. Have driven about 100 miles this week.

Sept. 5th. Continued down the Humboldt, crossing at different places but most of the time on the north side. The roads were very dusty, being from two to six inches deep. In some places it made over high bluffs and some long drive without water. The bottom in many places was wide with a luxuriant growth of grass, but the grass was not strengthening to the cattle and the water contained a good deal of alkali. The ground was completely covered with it and the soil seemed like an ash heap. There was no wood to be seen in the whole length of the river which was hemmed in by high ranges of mountains.

The nights were cold and on the 7th it snowed on the mountains so as to make them look white. Camped Sunday night six miles above Lawson's Meadows after traveling 110 miles. Followed the Humboldt about 240 miles.

#### FEED IS LACKING

Monday 12th. Drove to Lawsons Meadows but the grass was eat down so close that we had to drive back about 3 miles to get feed and grass for the desert. We procured about 150 pounds and at two o'clock, the 13th started down 16 miles to Antelope Springs, all the way a gradual rise. Arrived at the springs at 10 o'clock. It being in the night the cattle wouldn't drink, laid till seven in the

morning and then they wouldn't drink, hitched up and drove to Rabbit Hole Springs 16 miles. The road was rolling and in some places rough and stony and over another mountain. The water in the springs is blackish and bad, coming from holes dug in the clay, no feed here. Arrived at three and left at six, afternoon. Drove about 12 miles and laid down by the side of the road till morning, then drove eight miles to Hot Springs. There the cattle drank hearty. About five miles before reaching Hot Springs, struck onto a bottom as hard and level as a barn floor and we could see it for a distance of 40 miles in length and from four to a dozen miles wide, not a sign of vegetation on it, but a white hard baked clay and surrounded by very high mountains.

#### BOILING SPRINGS

The water at the springs is boiling hot, but spreads out and cools for stock. We put tea in a jug and boiled it in the water, and it steeped as quick as could be done on a stove. Arrived at nine, September 15th. Drove 12 miles farther on the same kind of road and arrived at Granite Creek at five o'clock having driven 64 miles without finding grass, the cattle were weak and tired. Some drives last a good many. One lost 13 on the last stretch. Turned the cattle out on the bottom for the night.

16th. Started at six and drove the cattle back on the mountain about three miles. Followed up a steep canyon where the creek ran. It was so steep and rocky that it was impossible for cattle to go up and probably the worst place that cattle were ever driven for feed.

17th. Laid over and lost an ox.

18th. Brought the cattle out of the mountains and started. Drove to Deep Springs, 12 miles and camped on what had been good feed, but now it was eaten off short.

19th. Laid over.

20th. Got an early start and drove 20 miles to Buffalo Springs. 12 miles of the road was on the barren bottoms and as good as a level plank road. Camped on poor feed and poor water.

21st. Drove to Smoky creek, about 16 miles, a part of the road was hilly, rough and stony and some a very heavy sand.

22nd. Drove 12 miles to Mud Springs. Had to climb one mountain the rest of the road was good. Some feed here but a limited amount of water.

23rd. Got an early start and drove 18 miles to Honey Lake Valley. It is the worst road we have traveled on the whole route, about 12 miles of it is completely paved with cobble stone. The wagon would roll for a mile at a time without touching the ground in fact there seemed to be no soil, but merely one laying of rocks on top of another.

Honey Lake Valley is very pretty place, surrounded by mountains, low rocky mountains on the East and on the West is the Sierra Nevada range high and steep, covered with timber which is quite a treat to see, after viewing the barren sage brush hills and mountains for so long. The soil is light, but good producing, good vegetables and wheat, but the climate is not adapted to corn, the nights are too cool. It is 73 miles from the desert.

24th. Drove about six miles and laid over on Susan Creek.

Being tired of following the wagon at the old pace on the morning of the 25th, started with a pack on my back for the land of gold. Stayed the first night at Presby's hotel, just over the summit and 15 miles from Honey Lake valley. It was a log cabin and our fare and bill was a fore-taste of California. I followed the pack trail to American valley, thence to Downieville, travelling a distance of a hundred miles in three days and a half, all the way over mountains, high, rough and steep. Some of the time in the region of perpetual snow. Here on the 28th of September I found Watson, an old friend, and made a halt after a journey of 154 days. It was really a welcome rest after being so long subject to fatigue, hardships and anxiety. The journey is one of continual toil from daylight till after dark and then perhaps half the night. The mind is always anxious about the stock, finding feed and water and about losing them.

Recapitulation of distances from  
Omaha to Honey Lake Valley

|                                                               | miles |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Omaha to Fort Kearney .....                                   | 190   |
| To the crossing of South Platte....                           | 165   |
| To Fort Laramie .....                                         | 165   |
| To crossing North Platte .....                                | 125   |
| To Sweet Water .....                                          | 55    |
| To South Pass .....                                           | 100   |
| To Subletts Cut-off .....                                     | 340   |
| To Salt Lake road .....                                       | 30    |
| To Humboldt Springs .....                                     | 135   |
| To Lawson's Meadows .....                                     | 250   |
| Across the Desert to Granite Cr. 64                           |       |
| To Honey Lake Valley .....                                    | 78    |
|                                                               | 1697  |
| Thence to Marysville .....                                    | 180   |
| (Continued on to Downieville after short time at Marysville.) |       |



Sept. 28th. 'Arrived' here on the North Fork of the Ynba. Was detained' here several days trying to bargain for a claim in the Valley Mining company. While dallying about to make a bargain to cut two and one-half cords of wood at \$2.00 a cord. Went to work.

#### GOES TO WORK

Oct. 6th. While working at the wood, engaged to work for Rusler in the Central company at \$3.00 a day and commenced work the 10th. Continued working for him and Crowell two weeks, the claim paying more than wages.

The 22nd Oct. Took out \$200.88 on the same day I bought Powele half interest (there being six) for a hundred dollars, paid half down and gave my note, payable 22nd November for the balance.

During the week we took out little and at Saturday noon had but little upwards of \$60. All began to think that it would be a poor week's work, but the last two tubs full made up for the rest of the week, one tub full yielding over a \$100 and one handsome piece was worth \$66.37. For the week \$211.35.

The weather ever since I have been here up to the present date, October 30th, has been pleasant. The days are warm and the sun shining bright and clear. The nights are cool and have had several frosts. The air is clear, pure and bracing, clouds are seldom to be seen and the sun has been obscured by clouds but once since we have been here. We are working in a canyon with mountains so high on either side that we cannot see six hours in a day.

Nov. 6th. Monday and Tuesday, worked at getting out timber and burning coal. Then went to work in the tunnel Thursday the 3rd. It commenced to rain very light almost like a fog, but kept on steady and increasing gradually until Friday it rained very fast. The drops were small, but plenty. The water increased in the river so that it carried away the upper dam. We worked nearly all day repairing it and on Saturday morning it was swept away again. That took the water away from the pump, so the hole filled up and stopped work altogether, so we only worked two days in the tunnel. It rained three days and nights without any intermission, but this morning it began to ease up a little and rained only by spells and has continued so all day. It is not cold and unaccompanied by wind. There is no snow in sight, but is supposed to be some on the highest mountains. We have had no real chilly weather yet.

Nov. 13th. Monday and Tuesday repaired the dams and got the hole partly clear of water with the expectation of getting to work in the tunnel, but Wednesday, the 9th, it commenced snowing and kept it up all day, at night it turned to rain and thawed the snow from the mountains, consequently raised the water very high and carried away our dam again. On Friday it cleared up and Saturday was really pleasant so we got to work. The nights are frosty and days warm.

#### DAM REPAIRED

Nov. 20th. Finished up the dam and got the pump to work but the water comes in so fast that it gains slowly, only worked three days this week. The water is nearly out now, so we expect to go to work Monday in the tunnel. Tuesday it rained some, turned to snow and then to rain. It has been cloudy and rainy all the week but not enough to stop work. Have had several frosty nights. Have spent two days prospecting, but all to no purpose.

Nov. 27th. It continued storming and finally the 29th it commenced snowing, the snow fell about two feet deep. We could not get to work on the hole this week, on the 28th of November, commenced to work. It was clear, pleasant weather with cold freezing nights but warm thawing days. The snow is gradually wasting away. Took out \$296.68 this week.

Continued to work with pleasant weather. It has moderated a good deal so that it freezes but little nights. We have butted up again, it falls in the upper tunnel which had to be cut down to a grade and in the lower drift had to cut through a huge boulder, so we made but little progress. Saturday the 10th of December, the water had raised, so we could not work. Took out \$95.35.

Dec. 18th. The past week has been very favorably for working. It freezes a little every night, but the days are warm and comfortable working. The sun shines out bright most of the time. The wind blew today for the first time in several weeks. We have hard slow work in the tunnels cutting bed rock and blasting boulders. However, we took out \$154.30 during the week.

Dec. 25th. Continued working in the tunnel until Saturday noon when a huge boulder that had been held to its place by the dirt top of it slipped from its bed and came down on the pump and smashed it so as to stop work. We were fortunate enough to be at dinner when it occurred. It commenced raining a little yesterday and a little today. Have worked four weeks now cutting through one boulder. Took \$57.00 for the week.

#### **GLOOMY DAYS AHEAD**

Jan. 1st, 1860. The holy days pass off gloomily here in the mountains surrounded by steep rocky mountains covered with snow, no roads, no stir, no recreation, nothing but cold wet hard work. This week repaired the pump and set it to work Wednesday night and Saturday afternoon went to

work in the hole, the rest of the time was getting out timber. The first part of the week was cold, the coldest we have had. It commenced storming Saturday and keeps it up today. Took out \$16.20.

Jan. 8th, 1860. It has continued stormy all the week, on Thursday the water raised in the hole so we could not work, Friday it rained like a shower all day, the water raised very high in the river but fell again yesterday; today it has snowed hard all day, falling in large flakes. We have had no wind with the storm. We cleaned up one crevice and took out only \$26.80.

Jan. 2nd. The water kept up till the 17th. We then went to work in a crevice on the high bed rock and in three and one-half days took out \$29. The weather has been clear and bright, the snow has all gone from the sunny side of the mountains. It commenced snowing today and fell about a foot deep. It freezes but little. Mining now is at low ebb. It is almost impossible to get employment otherwise than prospecting and that is not very enticing.

Jan. 29th. Started the pump on Wednesday and Friday got to work in the hole. The weather is excellent with considerable wind which is quite a rarity or has been up to date. The snow is nearly gone again from the sunny side of the mountains. Took out \$59.75.

February 5th. The weather for the past week has been excellent, the sun shining out clear and bright and freezing but very little nights. Took out only \$65.64.

Quit work in the Central on account of having considerable work to do before getting pay, such as a new belt and wheel and cutting bedrock and expecting a storm, so we concluded to adjourn till May next.

Feb. 4th, 1860. Made a bargain with Moore and Barke to go in company with them (& Watson) by paying \$75.00 when it comes out and have an equal share in everything.

Feb. 6th. Packed up some grub, it snowed a little for a few days, but not enough to stop work.

Tuesday, 7th. Commenced work prospecting in a tunnel three days, found nothing. Friday commenced putting up a derrick and on Wednesday the 15th turned on the water. We sluiced off for a week and cleaned up \$36.86.

#### SNOW BEGINS TO FALL

29th. It commenced snowing and continued three days. It has partially cleared up.

Saturday afternoon took out about \$4. It don't pay as we expected though. We have not got it thoroughly prospected yet and are still in hopes of getting good pay.

March 15th. The snow fell about four feet deep a few days ago. We have taken out here in all up to date \$1107. Have prospected some but found no pay.

My expenses for the past year are as follows:

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Clothing .....          | \$ 54.25 |
| California outfit ..... | 141.48   |
| Various expenses .....  | 125.88   |

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321.61

For claim in Central Mining company .....\$175.00

I have received as follows:

|                             |          |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Of Geo. McPherson .....     | \$150.00 |
| For work by the day .....   | 119.25   |
| For Dividend from claims .. | 119.30   |

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388.55

My effects and liabilities are:

|                                |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| 160 acres land value .....     | \$1000.00 |
| 1-6 interest in Central Co. .. | 175.00    |
| Cash in hand .....             | 13.50     |
| I owe Co. & Hannah .....       | 275.00    |

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Balance .....\$ 913.50

April 1st. The weather continued good till last Wednesday, when it commenced raining and has kept it up every since though we have lost no time by it. The ground is bare now except the peaks and deep canyons.

Watson and Burk both left here the 20th. Monday, so it leaves Moore and I to work alone. The gravel is deep with huge boulders which makes it very hard working and slow. Still we keep up good courage in hopes of finding pay.

It commenced snowing April 2nd and continued without any cessation till the 9th. The snow fell about five feet deep. It prevented us from working the whole week. But to make the best of a bad thing the miners collected together and spent the time singing and dancing and such other amusements as these circumstances would allow.

April 15th. For the past week the weather has been beautiful. The sky is clear and blue without a cloud or speck and the sun shines so bright that it is really delightful.

April 22nd. It was cloudy and stormed a little this week. Cleared up the 17th and took out \$74.75, the result of 30 day's work in all, about half the time spent in prospecting for another chanel but found none.

May 6th. It commenced storming the 3rd inst. and yesterday it snowed all day and looked real wintry. We cleaned up the 1st and took out \$64, the result of 33 day's work. It didn't pay and we have quit the crevice.

On the 9th and 10th it snowed heavy the last day it seemed really like winter and was about as cold as any weather we have had. The days are cool and of a very uniform temperature.

(THE END)



